

Privacy & Your Rights – Personal Health Information

Our mission is to provide a holistic approach to health care delivery. Our programs do not just address the curative needs of the individual but also address the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the Aboriginal communities in our region.

AIMS

This brochure aims to explain what Personal Health Information is, what information we collect and how we use it including when we disclose information. It tells you how to make a complaint if you have any concerns.

WHAT IS PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION?

Information that is about your health and that could reasonably identify you if someone reads it is called 'health information'. It includes your past, present and any planned future medical or health care.

WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED AND WHY?

We collect the following information; your contact details including address and phone numbers and emergency contact details; our Medicare number; your past medical history and the medical history about your family (if relevant to providing you care); information about your current health status and treatments and any information which may assist us to provide your health services that you have asked us to provide. We collect only information which we consider necessary to provide you comprehensive primary health care services and for the purpose of contacting you if it is necessary as part of your health care.

HOW IS MY PERSONAL INFORMATION USED?

Apart from providing you with health care services, we may use your information:

- To provide you with services you have sought by coming to us or directly related secondary services.
- To improve the quality of care we give to you.
- To improve the quality of our services.
- To plan and manage services.
- For research but only under strict guidelines, with our consent (unless the information is de-identified) and with the approval of the Board of Directors.
- To perform administrative tasks associated with your care and the management of the services.

USING AND DISCLOSING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION TO OTHERS

We will use and disclose your personal health information:

- If you have provided your consent.
- When it is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious risk to life, health or safety, for example, you are unconscious and need treatment.
- When it is for a directly related secondary purpose and you would reasonably expect the disclosure, for example, by giving necessary information on a pathology request form.
- To prevent a serious risk to the life, safety or health of a genetic relative.
- When the disclosure is to a person who is responsible for you and you are not legally or physically capable of giving consent and even then only the amount of information necessary to provide appropriate care or treatment.
- As necessary to perform administration tasks necessary to provide you with the health services you are seeking.
- For conducting service delivery planning or quality improvement with our health service.
- When we are legally obliged or required to disclose the information.
- The information is needed for Medicare payments or other health insurance rebates.

Only necessary information will be given in any circumstances. For example, we give only the minimum amount of information to Medicare in order to obtain the rebate for your treatment.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

- You have the right to know when information about you is sent to another person, for example, we will ask your permission to refer you to a specialist.
- You have the right to tell us if you don't want a particular Doctor, nurse or health worker involved in your healthcare.
- You have the right to ask us not to include your information for data collection.
- You have the right to ask your Doctor to see your medical records.
- You have the right to request that an error in your medical records is corrected.
- You have the right to raise any concerns or complaints you may have in respect to your privacy.

USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION THAT DOES NOT IDENTIFY ME

Sometimes it is necessary for us to use and disclose de-identified information. De-identified information means that no one person could reasonably be identified from the information. De-identified information is not personal information because it cannot identify a particular person. We use and disclose de-identified information in the following circumstances.

- For service delivery and business circumstances.
- For monitoring our services and for quality improvement.
- We disclose client data to funding bodies as part of our funding reports.
- We disclose client data via our annual report and business reports.
- For research purposes and only when strict guidelines are complied with and the Board of Directors have approved the research.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE PERSONAL INFORMATION YOU HAVE OR MY PRIVACY?

You can do a number of things when you are concerned about your privacy or the records we keep.

- Discuss the issue with your Doctor, nurse or Aboriginal Health Practitioner.
- If you think a record has a mistake, ask your Doctor to correct it.
- If you think your privacy has been breached, make a complaint to us or the Privacy Commissioner or the Office of Health Review (see the back of this brochure)

'YOUR PRIVACY IS OUR BUSINESS'

If you require more information on your privacy please talk to your GP, the Practice Manager, Registered Nurse, Midwife or the Aboriginal Health Worker.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Clinic: 60 Rifle Range Road, Rangeway, Geraldton, 6530

Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

Phone: 9956 6555

Fax: 9964 3225

If you would like further information, or wish to make a complaint please go to:

The WA Office of Health Review: 1800 813 583 or

The Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner: 1300 363 992

HOME VISITS

There may be times when a Doctor will need to visit you at home. This may happen any time, in or out of hours. Arrangements will be made between you and your Doctor.

MANAGING PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Your medical record is confidential. All staff at GRAMS respect the privacy and confidentiality of your health information. It is the policy of GRAMS to maintain security of personal health information at all times to ensure that this information is only available to authorised members of staff. We have a comprehensive policy on the management of Personal Health Information and a brochure for clients explaining the policy. Please ask at reception for a copy of this brochure.

MANKING AN APPOINTMENT

GRAMS operates a dual system of walk-in and appointment Clients are seen in order of arrival unless someone presents requiring urgent medical attention. Doctors see client for as long as required.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide the receptionist with your current emergency contacts in case of an emergency. We would also appreciate patients notifying receptionists of any changes of their address and updated Medicare and pension cards.

The Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service acknowledges the expertise and assistance from Accreditation Specialists and the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia in the development of this Information Sheet.